



INFLUENZA ACTIVITY SUMMARY 2000 - 2001

(February 22, 2001)

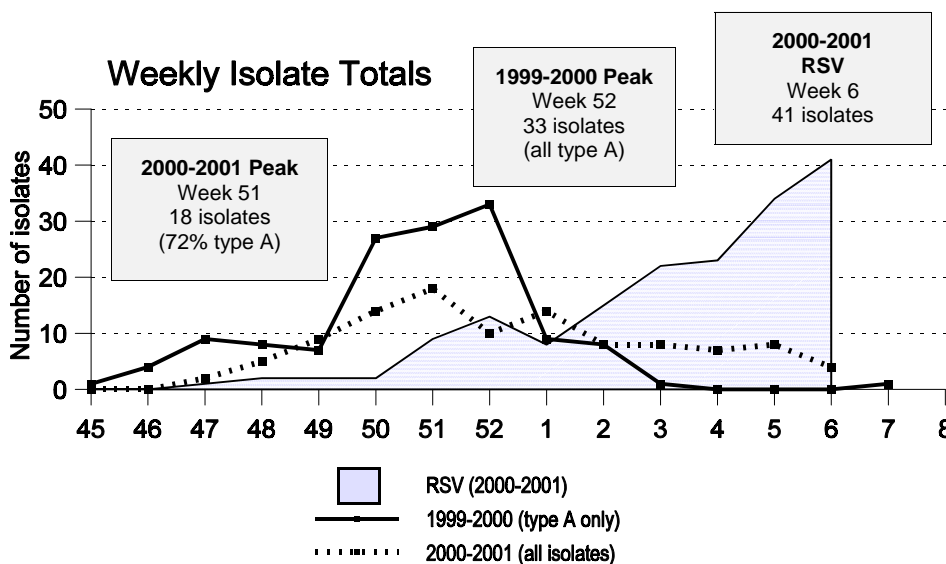
Overview – February 22, 2001:

Influenza activity is currently tapering off in Los Angeles County. However, the number of RSV isolate reports have sharply increased over the last few weeks, so respiratory illness in children and infants may continue despite low levels of influenza. While influenza activity may continue into March, overall, both locally and nationally, this season has been especially mild. In addition, unlike last year, a considerably high proportion of type B influenza has been identified. More than half of the isolates reported in LA County have been type B.

Los Angeles County Data

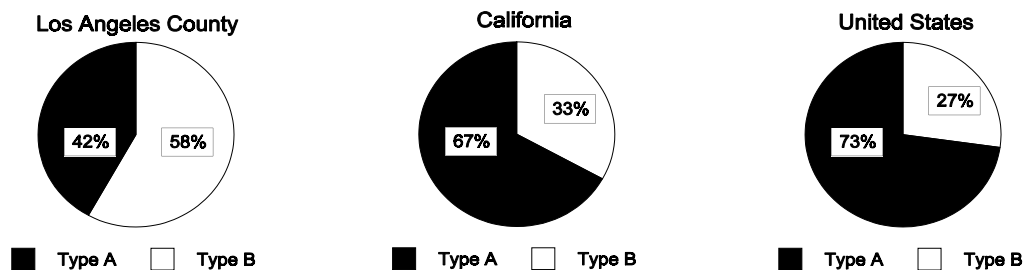
Weekly Influenza Isolate Totals (1999-2000 and 2000-2001 seasons):

The number of influenza isolates continues to wane into the new year, and based on a comparison of the weekly isolates reported during the previous year, the current flu season has been very mild. Compared to last year, there have been 23% fewer isolate reports.



However, Los Angeles County is currently experiencing a sharp increase in the number of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) isolates, a common trend which typically occurs *after* the peak in influenza activity. RSV tends to be more frequent and more severe in infants, children and the elderly. Individuals with compromised cardiac, pulmonary or immune systems are at increased risk for severe illness. Since, like influenza, RSV is spread primarily by airborne transmission, covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze, washing your hands frequently, and staying home if ill can all help to prevent the spread of RSV.

There has been a high proportion of type B influenza activity nationally and *especially* locally. To date, in Los Angeles County, more than half of the influenza isolates have been type B. Across California, roughly a third have been type B, and nationally, slightly more than a fourth have been type B.

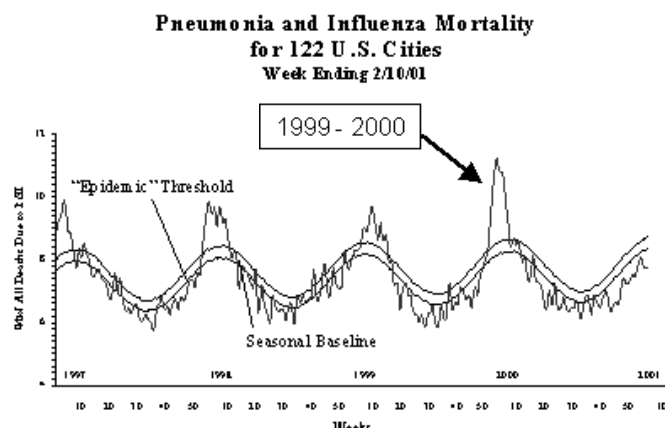




Nationwide Data

The following information is collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Additional influenza-related surveillance information can be obtained at their web site: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/weekly.htm>.

Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality:



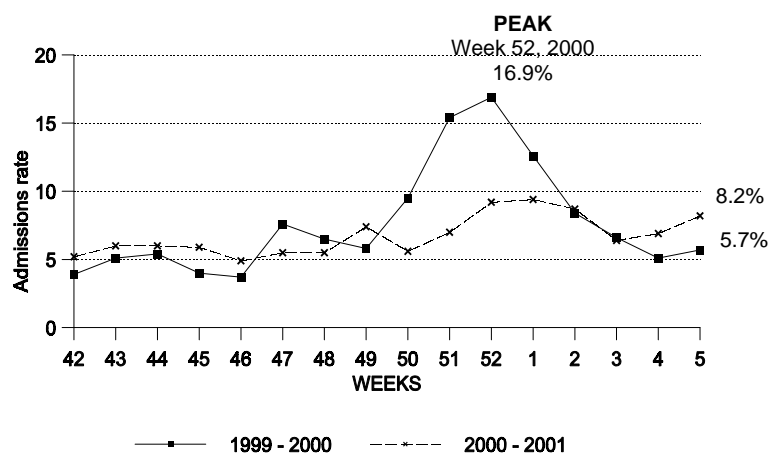
The 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System gathers the number of pneumonia and influenza deaths from selected cities across the nation in order to determine the extent of influenza activity. Consistent with other surveillance findings which have indicated that this has been a mild season, the number of pneumonia and influenza deaths have also been low compared to historical averages. While last season (1999 - 2000) there was a dramatic peak in pneumonia and influenza mortality, this season, the number of reported deaths have seldom exceeded the seasonal baseline or the epidemic threshold.



California State Data

The following information is collected by the California Department of Health Services, Division of Communicable Disease Control; additional influenza-related information is available at <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/dcdc/vrdl/html/Fluintro.htm>.

Southern California Admission Rate for Influenza-like Illness:



The overall rate of influenza-like admissions from four Southern California Kaiser facilities never peaked to the same extent as it did last year. For week 5 of 2001, the admission rate slightly increased to 8.2% from 6.9% measured during week 4.